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ABSTRACT

This document consists of four issues of a newsletter for educators at the middle level. The issues each contain a main article, along with shorter articles and regular columns. The Fall 1997 issue focuses on basic habits of achievement; an additional article discusses building a middle school community. The vice president's column for this issue discusses using community projects that educate and entertain. The Winter 1997 issue's topic is "Dance as a Multicultural Artistic Experience." A sidebar discusses guns in school, while another article addresses planning for technology in tomorrow's schools. The vice president's column addresses ACEI (Association for Childhood Educational International) committee updates and future plans. The Spring 1998 newsletter focuses on defining and shaping a culture for the middle school classroom. A sidebar discusses selecting resources for multicultural education, and the executive director's column describes resources on ACEI's Web site. The Summer 1998 issue focuses on lessons learned from successful middle level advisory programs. A sidebar describes a study on factors that cause teens to engage in sexually aggressive behavior. The vice president's column discusses group projects in the classroom. All issues contain listings of new Web resources. (EV)

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Focus on Middle School (Ages 11-13)
A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community
1997-1998

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ACEI

Fall 1997 • Vol. 10, No. 1

Focus on Middle School ages 11-13

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

1998 Duracell/NSTA Competition

For the first time, the Duracell/National Science Teachers Association Scholarship Competition is open to students in grades 7 and 8, as well as to two-person teams. This 16th annual competition rewards the creativity of students who invent battery-operated devices that are practical or entertaining.

Students in grades 7-12 are invited to participate either individually or in pairs. Entries will be judged in two categories: grades 7-9 and grades 10-12. Fifty entries will be selected in each of the two categories. Student inventors will then send their devices to Duracell headquarters for final judging. A minimum of 100 and a maximum of 200 students will be awarded U.S. savings bonds, with the top winners of each category receiving $20,000 bonds. Sponsoring teachers of the top three winners in each category will receive $2,000 gift certificates for computer equipment. Teacher sponsors for all finalists will receive gifts.

For more information and to receive a 1998 Duracell/NSTA Scholarship Competition entry packet, call 888-255-4242., or visit their Web sites at http://www.nsta.org/programs/97/duracell.htm and http://www.duracell.com/Science/science.html.

On Basic Habits of Achievement

Jeanette Allison, Arizona State University West, Phoenix
Emily K. DeCicco, President, DeCicco and Associates, Keswick, Virginia

Think for a moment about two habits you may have: one desirable and one undesirable. When we think about our own habits, we can understand how central they are to how well we function. Habits can either mobilize or impede an individual's efforts to succeed. We have seen just how true this is at Castle Hill School.

Castle Hill School

Six years ago, few people would have given young adolescents at Castle Hill School much chance to succeed. Academically, student achievement records were at an all-time low. Socially, their behaviors resulted in high discipline referral rates. Today, however, Castle Hill students are the talk of both the district and the nation in a positive way. Castle Hill has become a model school for achievement reform (Hartman, DeCicco & Griffin, 1994; Schmoker, 1996).

Why the change? One important reason why Castle Hill was able to turn itself around is attributed to *basic habits of achievement* (e.g., perseverance). By using basic habits, students have been able to engage in investigative studies we call Independent Research Projects (IRPs) (Allison & DeCicco, 1997). Simple, but important, habits that the students adopted were at the heart of their successes.

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What Are Habits of Achievement?

What exactly is a habit? A habit is a manner of conducting one's self, or a usual manner of behavior (Mish, 1990). A habit is an action that, when practiced consistently, becomes a part of someone.

Many habits contribute to achievement. At Castle Hill, six habits continue to be essential to achievement. These are:

1. *Preparation.* In order for students to "hit the ground running" when they come to school, they maintain the necessary tools for learning, such as writing instruments, paper, books, desks/tables, cubbies/lockers, scissors, etc.
2. *Organization.* Organization is a key element in learning. Teachers help students devote careful attention to responsibilities and plans. Through organization, students are able to spend time at school more constructively.
3. *Forethought.* Students try to envision the learning process: What it will take to accomplish tasks, and how will they get the tasks accomplished? Students are encouraged to continually ask themselves "What do I need to do?"
4. *Focus.* With all the competing demands placed on students, it helps if they focus on one task at a time. If they can "tune out" extraneous distractions, such as attending to unrelated tasks, they can free up mental energy to learn well from one task at a time.
5. *Follow-through.* This is probably the most challenging habit for students to acquire. They need to be encouraged to stay with a project once they begin. They can alter it, change its nature and even decide to terminate it; ultimately, however, they are responsible for their plans.
6. *Perseverance.* We like to think of perseverance as "stick-to-it-ness." Students are able to develop the inclination to progress forward when they are discouraged, or when their route in learning shifts. They will try and try again—a habit of "toughing it out."

As much as possible, students are responsible for these habits on a *daily* basis. Their teachers also try to practice these habits and help students prioritize them.

Why Focus on Habits of Achievement?

There are many good reasons to incorporate helpful habits into students' daily routines. We offer four of them below.

Good habits are the basis of achievement. Like many skills and talents in life, constructive habits are a foundation for success. Take cooking, for example. If one is to become a chef, basic culinary habits are essential to carry out more sophisticated tasks. An organized kitchen is the foundation for culinary efficiency and excellence. A chef also must be sure that all the necessary tools are readily available and in good condition. Students also need basic habits and tools for their educational creations.

Good habits pay off for students. Good habits help students see the fruits of their efforts earlier in the learning cycle. Instead of spending half their time just getting started on a task, they can be well into it, experiencing its intrinsic rewards

Resources

websites for educators

www.rethinkingschools.org
Educators and activists can access this site for information, resources and links devoted to transforming U.S. education.

http://www.essex1/com/people/sonia/SolarSolutions/index.htm
Solar Solutions introduces students and teachers to solar electricity through hands-on experience, and provides a website with teaching ideas.

http://www.nga.gov
The National Gallery of Art's site features over 3,200 full-view digital images and 3,800 details of art from its collection. It also includes tours and historical audio segments.

http://www.askasia.org
This website from the Asia Society offers classroom-tested resources and cultural information, games and activities and links to relevant people, places and institutions.

sooner. At Castle Hill, students participated in an Independent Research Project on a professional football team. By adhering to basic habits of achievement, they engaged in many interesting facets of this project, such as developing and conducting an interview with a football player.

Good habits help students make better use of their time. By directing more energy toward the meaningful aspects of learning, such as problem solving, Castle Hill teachers can spend more time helping students achieve. Students are freed up from wasting time finding markers, locating a certain book, not knowing what to do next and so forth. This principle follows the age-old saying: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

When put together, smaller habits allow us to do later the really interesting things we enjoy.

Desirable habits help students break undesirable habits. Castle Hill students are witnessing firsthand the effects of desirable and undesirable habits on achievement. Before experiencing the intrinsic benefits of desirable habits, they had some well-established habits that were impeding their progress (e.g., procrastination, disorganization). They spent hours searching for pencils, markers, books and materials to use for projects. When teachers began to direct students' attention to more constructive habits, such as preparing learning tools ahead of time, students began to see schooling as more of an inquisitive time, rather than a mundane task of search-and-retrieve.

Helping Students Develop Habits of Achievement

How can we help students acquire habits of achievement? Implementation of the following tips may vary, but we encourage teachers to adhere to these six basic habits of achievement as much as possible: preparation, organization, forethought, focus, follow-through and perseverance.

Start with yourself. Begin with these three steps:

1. Assess your own habits first. Are you willing to adopt the same habits you will require of your students? Your words must match your actions, or you might find students saying, "Teacher, your actions speak so loudly, I can't hear a word you're saying!"

2. Target a few habits to make a part of your life. In order to make habits part of your routine, you must practice them consistently. Your goal is to make these habits automatic in daily routines. When you try to do this yourself, you will gain a better appreciation for what students will experience when developing desirable habits and "unlearning" undesirable ones.

3. Quietly and consistently model these habits. It is necessary for students to see you performing these habits faithfully. Although they may not notice directly how you function, they will sense how efficiently you conduct yourself.

Now involve students. Students will have seen you practicing desirable habits. In their eyes, you will have earned the "right" to expect the same habits from them. Continue with these next four steps:

1. Conduct a group discussion about habits. Share the importance of your own habits on how you function on the job and at home. Discuss the positive way you feel when your goals are accomplished. Lead into how you want them also to have habits that will help, not hinder, their goals.

2. Solicit students' opinions about habits that help, rather than hinder, achievement. Help students come to the conclusion that constructive habits (e.g., thinking ahead) help them move forward, whereas unconstructive habits (e.g., procrastination) slow them down in the long run.

3. Share with them the six habits of achievement that you want each person in class to practice, including yourself. Help students understand that, "One habit leads to another habit." And that "When put together, smaller habits allow us to do later the really interesting things we enjoy." The point is that they are using meaningful habits that lead to meaningful, bigger tasks, and not just acquiring habits for habits' sake.

4. Post and practice these habits. Be honest with

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students that basic habits are not the most interesting behaviors they will acquire, but they are critical ones that need to be practiced daily. You can even say, "First you make the habit, then the habit makes you!" Then, ask students what interesting activities, or projects, they would like to participate in. Discuss how the basic habits enable them to accomplish those bigger activities and projects.

Closing

Working with Castle Hill students, many of whom were underachievers, taught us many lessons. First, we became more convinced that basic habits of achievement are necessary in the learning cycle. Second, students showed us that *it's never too late to become an achiever*. A major goal of education should be to prepare students to be life-long learners who are self-directed and rely on internal rewards of their efforts. And third, teachers will benefit personally by operating more smoothly within their classroom, and they also will witness increased achievement among students (see Allison, 1997; Allison & DeCicco, 1997; Hartman, DeCicco & Griffin, 1994).

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Building a Middle School Community

M. Lee Manning, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

The benefits of school communities and the increasing importance of close and positive relationships among young adolescents and educators suggest that middle school educators should develop a sense of community. For centuries people have experienced the need for a "sense of community" and have realized the benefits of considering themselves a part of a group. Functioning as part of a community, members feel regard for other community members and feel concern for the welfare of the group. This article defines "a sense of community," offers a rationale for young adolescents and educators forming middle school communities, looks at several special challenges, and offers several facilitating strategies for developing middle school communities.

Defining a Sense of Community

Westheimer and Kahne (1993) defined community "as a process marked by interaction and deliberation among individuals who share common interests and commitment to common goals" (p. 325). Graves (1992) defined community as "an inherently cooperative, cohesive, and self-reflective group entity whose members work on a regular and face-to-face basis toward common goals while respecting a variety of perspectives, values, and life styles" (p. 64).

Characteristics that describe community, or a sense of community, include:

1. organization around social relationships and interdependencies that nurture those relationships
2. empowerment of learners and educators, and a focus on commitments, obligations and duties that people feel toward each other and toward the school
3. bonding of individuals by natural will and a set of shared ideas and ideals. (Sergiovanni, 1994b)

In a genuine school community, people feel a sense of duty to work toward the welfare of the community; attachment and membership to the community; and a sense of self-determination that

involves knowledge, understanding and a rational sense of awareness regarding their duty and attachment to the community (Sergiovanni, 1994b).

Rationale for a Sense of Community

Sergiovanni (1994b) wrote that people have a human need to belong to others and to consider themselves part of a group that forsakes some measure of individuality to work toward common goals. Communities can provide a sense of belonging and feeling that, collectively, people will work toward agreed-upon and shared goals. Without this sense of community, people risk feeling alienated.

Building a sense of school community is important because schools and classrooms need to be cooperative communities where learners and educators learn and work in a comfortable and interdependent environment. Educators expect peers to support and assist them in educational efforts—collaboration should occur in the development of both methods and curricula (Graves, 1992).

Young adolescents' developing ability to understand and to form opinions of others also suggests the need for a sense of community. For example, a sense of community can contribute to learners making ethical choices about their behavior toward individuals and groups, determining what traits they want in friends, developing personal attitudes toward other people and institutions, perceiving differences among people and eventually developing attitudes toward others' differences, and engaging in social analysis of their treatment of others (Manning, 1995).

Societal and demographic changes such as changes in family life, increased cultural diversity and increased violence also suggest middle school educators need to build a sense of community. School communities can address these factors as they provide learners with feelings of physical and psychological safety and with feelings that significant adults and other learners know and respect them.

Challenges Confronting Community Builders

First, a dilemma sometimes occurs as individuals struggle to equate community and individual freedom. While possible solutions vary, individuals can try to teach others about the values and benefits to be accrued from a sense of community—minds working collaboratively have the potential for accomplishing more than individuals working in isolation (Scoble, 1987).

A second dilemma arises when communities become exclusionary (Westheimer & Kahne, 1993). The very essence of community might be lost when communities exclude some people because of race, cultural background, opinions, social class or other features that make them different. Community builders can address exclusionary practices by building a firm identity within the community, such as teaching the consequences of non-cooperation and establishing norms such as "We can work with anyone in our class" (Graves, 1992, p. 69) and "We each have a piece of the puzzle" (Graves, 1992, p. 69).

A third dilemma, the turnover among community members, substantiates the belief that building a sense of community is a process rather than a finished product. The process continues as people enter and leave the community. Existing community members often find that establishing conducive conditions year after year is a difficult task (Westheimer & Kahne, 1993). Possible solutions include: always making new educators and students feel welcome to the school community, offering meaningful roles and making sure new members do not perceive resistance (whether real or imagined) from cliques.

Strategies for Developing a Middle School Community

Not for "the faint-hearted" (Sergiovanni, 1994b, p. xix), community building takes courage: "There is no recipe for building community. No correlates exist to implement. There is no list available to follow, and there is no package for trainers to deliver" (Sergiovanni, 1994a, p. 218).

Each community should be considered an evolving process that begins with a state of mind (Sergiovanni, 1994b). For transformation from "individuals" to "communities" to occur, potential community members should be linked by unified action, which includes shared values, conceptions and ideas. Educators should accept the fact that a sense of community develops as a slow process (Graves, 1992).

Graves (1992) suggested several stages for schools engaging in the community-building process:

Stage 1—Forming the community: Who are we? People naturally want to know their place within

the community. During this stage, people find their place within the group by asking questions such as "Who are you?" (p. 68) and "Who am I?" (p. 68). Directions might include defining the group by choosing a name or logo that can be displayed on a banner; creating events to celebrate group unity, such as celebrations of member or community achievements; using unifying daily classroom or school rituals; collaborating on events such as field trips, parties and cooperative adventures; incorporating bonding experiences at least twice yearly such as a retreat, a camp-out, a family night or a school-wide carnival (Graves, 1992).

Stage 2—Exploring community: What can we do together? As community members feel accepted and begin to value one another, they begin to explore their purpose as a group (Graves, 1992). Activities for this exploration stage include more community-building, to build rapport and to practice communication skills; perspective-taking activities, such as role plays and role reversals; and explicit teaching of group formation procedures and cooperative skills necessary for collaborative tasks.

Stage 3—Functioning productively: How can we do our best? Educators continually determine how improvements can be made. Hurdles, internal resistance and obstacles will still challenge community members to propose adequate responses. Strategies include listening to others' points of view, accepting responsibility to find a balance between individuals and groups, using role playing in small and large groups, building cooperative skills, using interpersonal organizations to ensure participation and rapport, and learning techniques for conflict management and resolution strategies (Graves, 1992).

Stage 4—Providing outreach: How can we help others? Providing outreach helps others and functions as a reward to community members who have succeeded. Educators can serve as resource people or consultants to people who are new to the school and can also provide outreach to community builders in other schools. Students may present a cooperative venture, such as a cooperative game, a radio show, an art project or community service project (Graves, 1992).

Several facilitating strategies that contribute to effective community building include encouraging attendance at meetings, ensuring confidentiality, allowing a member to "pass" when he or she does not want to voice an opinion, ensuring discussions are inclusionary rather than exclusionary, reiterating the community's goals and purposes, providing all members with opportunities to speak in order to share information relevant to the group, facilitating and articulating members' feelings, and examining the community's interactions and process of development (Canning, 1993).

Summary

Throughout history, people have had a notion of what communities mean, the importance of feeling a sense of commitment to others, and how individuals can accomplish more working collaboratively rather than in isolation. Definitions of "community" and "building a sense of community" have been hazy and nebulous, but increasingly, educators are developing a clearer notion of "what a sense of community means" and "how communities can be developed." Educators know definitions, defining characteristics, rationales and challenges. The growing body of writing on "communities" and "building a sense of community" and the recent interest in collaboration suggest middle school educators can build effective school communities. As with all school efforts, the actual success of community will depend upon learners' and educators' determination to make communities a reality.

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community projects that educate and entertain

Last spring was a very busy time for me. In late May, after the ACEI Annual Conference in Portland, four of my students and I joined nine other teams from around the U.S. in the finals of the Bayer Corporation, *Discover Magazine*, Christopher Columbus Foundation and National Science Foundation "Community Innovation" competition, judged at EPCOT Center at Walt Disney World in Florida. I would like to share this project and pique your interest in participating for the 1997-98 academic year.

This 6th- through 8th-grade competition challenged students to use science, technology and engineering to invent solutions that would improve the quality of life in their communities. Teams of four students must apply the scientific method to solve real-world problems. This contest enhances participants' curiosity, resourcefulness, and creative and critical thinking skills.

Last October, I shared the application with my 5th- and 6th-grade class. While most of the students were new to my multi-age classroom, four students were starting their third year with me. Those veterans wanted a project to take ownership in and began meeting after school with me and several parents. They identified many neighborhood concerns and settled on drivers running red lights.

They gathered 24 hours worth of data, and met with neighborhood activists, traffic engineers and their city council representative. The students understood the severity of the problem as they stood on the corners counting the drivers who ran red lights. They took data three different times during the day and at two intersections.

The students then contacted the Director of Transportation with the Department of Public Works. They began recording the license plate numbers and then faxing these numbers to the director's office. He then sent violators friendly letters calling to their attention that they had run a red light.

The next step was to test a temporary solution. The students worked in pairs, one standing halfway up the block dressed in a brightly colored safety patrol poncho holding a large, orange sign that read, "STOP AHEAD." The other student stood at the corner collecting data. While that cut violations, they knew it was not a permanent solution. They persuaded the Director of Transportation to put up two stoplight warning signs. Yet the drivers continued to run red lights. Although the signs were the students' original solution, the director helped them to think about a higher tech solution. The team learned about an automatic "photocop" that could be tied to the traffic lights and sensors in the crosswalks that take pictures of cars running red lights.

A local television crew interviewed the students for the 6 p.m. news and followed their progress throughout the competition. The students also worked with high school students to edit a five-minute videotape and completed a nine-page entry form.

In early April, they received word that they had made it to the semifinals. Our regional coordinator invited all the midwest teams to prepare a presentation for each other and family members at the Science Museum of Minnesota. This gave the students experience in speaking to the public.

Later that month, the students heard that they were in the finals. They received $250 to prepare a three-dimensional display for the competition, prepare a looped television clip, and create an interactive computer survey to gather public data while at EPCOT.

The six days at Walt Disney World were exciting. Students:

- displayed and presented their solution to the public for two days
- competed for a $25,000 community grant and individual savings bonds
- participated in the *Discover Magazine* Awards for Technological Innovation and met with adult winners
- visited the various theme parks to gather data on the physics of various rides, take behind-the-scenes tours and enjoy the rides
- met motivational speaker Chad Foster, who told them to remember that as they pursue their dreams, other doors will open.

What sets this apart from other competitions? There are several reasons to pursue this competition:

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- It appeals to all students, not just the brightest.
- The prizes are substantial, substantive and invest in the community. A special $25,000 grant will help a team and the community work together to bring the idea to life.
- The competition gives students a rich experience in the scientific process and an opportunity to excel. A regional coordinator is available to help teams network with experts in whatever field will be most helpful.
- This is truly community-focused. The entries focus on inquiry-based problems that emerge from the students' own communities.
- Creativity and resourcefulness is emphasized.
- The competition is open to all youth of middle-school age.
- There is no fee for entry. In fact, if a team makes it to the finals, it receives money to develop the entry. This helps to level the playing field.

For more information, contact Stephanie Hallman at 800-291-6020; success@edumedia.com. Check out the website at www.nsf.gov/bayer-nst-award.htm to access last year's winning entries. We did not win, but we had a lot of fun! Register your students right away and begin challenging kids to apply their cranial matter to a community matter.

—M.J. Savaiano, Vice President Representing Later Childhood/Early Adolescence

Focus on Middle School

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Armed and Ready for School

A recent national youth poll released by Children's Institute International (CII) reveals that nearly half of America's teenagers, whether living in inner cities, suburbs or rural areas, believe that their schools are becoming more violent all the time. According to the poll, an overwhelming number of teens (over 90 percent) told researchers that they perceive the world as getting more violent. In addition, over one third said that the threat of violence seems to be always present in their lives, and almost 40 percent said that they sometimes had to be violent to protect themselves.

A significant number of teens also feel unsafe when outside the home. Forty-two percent said they did not always feel safe at school, and even more (45 percent) said they did not always feel safe walking in their neighborhood at night.

Other key survey findings include:

A disturbing number of teens in America carry guns for protection. While the percentage of teens who reported carrying a gun for protection seems small (1.7 percent), statistically it is a sizable population. Some 386,000 teens carried a gun for protection at least once last year, and at least 181,000 carried a gun more than once a month during

continued on page 3 . . .

Dance As a Multicultural Artistic Experience

Scott Morrow, a long-time ACEI member, is Director-in-Chief of the Institute of Advancement of Education in Dance in New York City and the Scott Morrow Dance Theatre in Astoria, New York. As choreographer, educator and researcher, he directs workshops using jazz dance as a medium for multicultural understanding. The following interview was conducted by Joanne Haroutounian for the National Association for Gifted Children.

J.H.: **How do you use dance to instill the importance of multicultural understanding in your workshops?**

S.M.: I use dance as a vehicle to introduce learning in the arts to as many types of people as I can—from any discipline. Using the arts as a vehicle for learning creates an experience that is not available to other disciplines. Learning becomes richer when experienced through the arts. In particular, I use it to explore education as a multicultural experience.

I use the art form of jazz dancing as a metaphor for ideals yet to be realized in the United States. Jazz is multicultural in its very essence. Teaching through jazz dance affords experiential learning translated through a rich movement language by tracing its roots, which are multicultural in their very essence—from African, Caribbean and European traditions—and realizing how they are fused to create a new dance "language."

Movement experiences are placed in a historical context, and

infused throughout the dance experience. As participants are moving, they are receiving historical information, and it is infused in the learning experience as they are dancing. Many have read books and heard lectures, but have never felt the power of the art—what another culture feels like. The best way to understand a culture is to live it, to feel it.

What is the commonality that defines what it means to be an American?

J.H.: **Can you expand on what you mean by multicultural differences and commonalities? How does this describe jazz and American culture?**

S.M.: The use of jazz, which is multicultural in its very essence, offers a beautiful framework to affirm differences and celebrate a new commonality. Now educators are beginning to celebrate difference—I believe this is a beginning, not an end. Stories of different cultures are now being brought into classrooms. However, these presentations are usually in isolation, like a cafeteria approach—one plate from Africa, one plate from Asia, etc. When the stories are brought in, they must be from the perspective of that culture. That *must* be done. Once that is done, it is the beginning. However, this is celebrating difference. If you only celebrate difference, what you come out with is difference.

What is the commonality that defines what it means to be an American? If we look at jazz music and dance, we realize they present a vision to aspire to, both culturally and politically. Participants in these art forms are experiencing the vision of how these cultures fuse together to create a new commonality. Jazz experience allows participants to understand not only a form of cultural union, but [also] a political union.

When one is engaged in jazz musically, or through movement, it is actually democracy in artistic action. Jazz musicians are working together. In jazz, you have rights and responsibilities—your right is to be as bold, courageous, imaginative or innovative as you can be. If you do not bring those qualities into the endeavor, the other musicians will walk away from you. They are asking you to present your point of view. Your responsibility is to listen and to hear what they are saying. You might have four or five dissident ideas going on through the process of collective improvisation. Musicians are listening to ideas from each other and using these ideas [as] springboard[s for] new ideas. In the final analysis, after the performance is over, what has been created is a pleasing, cohesive, aesthetic whole. Out of these dissident

Resources
web sites for educators

www.scholastic.com
Junior Scholastic Interactive is for students and teachers grades 5 through 9. In addition to current events lessons, the site features geography games and information on cover stories from *Junior Scholastic*, a current events magazine for middle school students.

www.tobaccofreekids.org
This Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Web site shows kids what tobacco can do to the human body.

www.ebig.com
The Britannica Internet Guide provides users with an efficient and authoritative Internet navigation service. By offering access to quality Web sites that contain valuable information, the Guide provides the tools to find what you are looking for on the Web.

http://nobel.eb.com
Encyclopedia Britannica®, Inc. introduces The Britannica Guide to the Nobel Prizes Web site. Users can explore hyperlinked tables of all winners, complete with photos, video, audio and articles.

ideas comes a harmonious piece of work. Therefore, you are working and presenting your individual ideas as boldly as you can and, in the end, you have created something that is larger than your own. Jazz could not have emerged from any other country except the United States. To experience jazz is to experience the political system at work. It creates something uniquely new.

Society's problems today stem from fear of the "other"—ideas, heritage, color—all of those areas that will be a threat to society. Jazz, as a vision, has great philosophic implications. It demonstrates how society can be enriched by an individual form of expression.

J.H.: **How do you use dance to communicate the importance of artistic learning to administrators and community leaders?**
S.M.: You realize that many aerospace engineers, chemists and anthropologists have never really had an artistic experience. Experiencing the art for the first time—experiencing it the way that I just described—they feel it in the "gut." When we talk about teaching and the nature of learning, they are also witnessing a person modeling the rhetoric. I do not *tell* them about these things—they *experience* these things. It comes down to construction of your own learning. I present dance experiences that allow African ways of moving, and Irish ways of moving. Then we mold an Irish jig with something from Senegal. Fusing the two dance forms creates

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the same period. Not surprisingly, more than 15 percent of teens surveyed said they personally knew someone who had carried a gun to school. There were no substantial percentage differences among urban, suburban and rural teens on these questions.

Influence of gangs present in all types of communities. More than 40 percent of teens said they know other teenagers who are members of gangs. One in five report they have friends who are gang members. Those who have friends in gangs are much more likely to have been the victims of violence in the last year and are two and a half times more likely to believe they have to be violent to protect themselves.

Teens believe they learn to be violent. Three out of four teens (75 percent) believe that violent behavior is learned, not innate. Of those, about 43 percent think that violence is learned from parents. Another 20 percent said it is learned from television. Approximately 15 percent say it is learned from friends or other people in the neighborhood. High-risk teens, that is those who have carried a knife or gun for protection or fought more than five times in the past year (15.6 percent of all teens), are significantly more likely to believe that violence is learned. These teens, however, are less likely to attribute learned violence to parents.

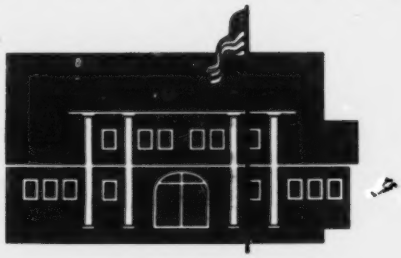
More than 40% of teens said they know other teenagers who are members of gangs.

Drugs and alcohol cause violence. About 85 percent of teens believe that drugs and alcohol are important factors contributing to violence within families as well as among young people. A majority (51 percent) feel that drugs and alcohol are a "very important" cause of violence, but boys are less likely than girls to believe that drugs and alcohol are important causes of violence among youth.

Girls are less optimistic than boys. Boys and girls have different experiences with and opinions about violence. Girls are more fearful of violence than boys, see violence as a growing problem in society, are less optimistic about the future and are less inclined to say that violence is appropriate under any circumstances. Boys, however, are more often the victims of violence than girls.

Founded more than 90 years ago, Children's Institute International (CII) is a private, non-profit organization specializing in the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect. Located in Los Angeles, CII focuses on developing innovative solutions to the most intractable of social, emotional and economic problems facing children and families today.

Planning for Technology in Tomorrow's Schools



Computers, along with communications and instructional technologies such as interactive video and Internet access, are causing significant changes in the way our children are taught and in the physical structure of the traditional American classroom.

In an increasingly visual world, children are receiving more and more instruction from electronic teaching aids and on-line resources, and through new teaching methods, such as interactive group learning. As a result, the role of the teacher is changing from instructor to facilitator. "Technology is creating a major paradigm shift in classroom learning, and therefore, [in] school planning and design," says John W. Focke, FAIA, a specialist in school and library design with Ray Bailey Architects, Inc.

With the majority of America's classroom space already built, architects who assess school facilities to renovate and retrofit classrooms must understand how technology influences learning. By helping school administrators forecast long-range building needs, experienced architects, such as Focke, are assisting districts in developing capital planning and selling the necessary bond referendums.

Planning for flexibility is the key. Anticipating rapid changes in technologies, Focke considers designs for the 21st century prototype school to be realistically good for only the first decade of the new century. After that it is difficult to say what schools they will need. By planning for functional and electronic flexibility and growth, however, school buildings can have a 50-year design life.

To date, the 1990s has been a decade of experimentation in the social and management reorganization of schools. Prior to this decade, most schools were arranged according to grade level and department. While many schools still are organized in this manner, the growing trend among progressive school districts is to embrace a new academic philosophy that includes:

Time management, student management and teaching teams. New concepts in how students use their time will lead to experimentation in scheduling techniques. Block scheduling, developed in the 1990s, extends students' learning time to 90-minute sessions, with four class periods per day over a 10-day cycle. Coupled with the management concept of organizing students by core curriculum rather than academic departments, block scheduling can integrate core curriculum programs and enhance students' opportunities for "interactive learning."

Students of all ages becoming technology literate and connected to a global literacy network. This network will include the Internet, the local public library, the regional university library and education on-line services. Parents, teachers, students and schools will be connected via home computers, laptops and Web sites. Teachers will support parents' efforts at home, and parents will provide greater support to students, teachers and schools. The public school is our best opportunity for equity in gaining access to this new world of information. Such access is the challenge in chronically under-funded public schools. School designs must accommodate new patterns of student and parent access to information resources and interactive learning. In order to accommodate changing needs, new architectural forms are required.

Classrooms becoming learning resource labs. In the student world of connectivity, interactive learning and project-oriented team learning, the traditional classroom will become a 20th century relic. The Learning Resource Lab is a multi-discipline, interactive learning environment for students and teachers. Twenty percent larger than traditional classrooms, learning labs will provide for multimedia stations, learning teams and flexible arrangements of furniture, equipment and space. Specialized learning labs will combine technologies to introduce students to applications and simulations with multiple technologies (i.e., integrating digital computing with physical exercise equipment and physiological monitoring).

Social, interactive and visual learning environments. The design of the 21st century school must recognize students' needs for space, environment and visual stimulation as a requisite to interactive learning. Highly focused learning and technology comes with an equal need for student socialization, interactivity with peers and visually engaging environments. Educators are quick to realize that the school environment cannot become "cyberspace." Well-designed student commons, food courts, student performance spaces and student fitness facilities are needed.

Educators are learning they cannot simply place 10 computer stations in a row along the back wall of a classroom. Electronic cables, noise levels, lighting and heat from the computers are all factors that affect how and where technology is introduced into classrooms. Focke believes that architects must be involved in a school project even before capital budgeting begins to ensure that budgets include costs for larger classrooms that can accommodate interactive learning and instructional resources.

In the prototype 21st century school, for example, students will have to meet well-defined technology literacy goals as part of their grade level curriculum. To encourage home study and involve parents more in what is happening in the classroom, students may be issued laptop computers with a district-only network access. Every school in the district will have a Web page, a student television program with an onsite television studio and a cable network. Teachers will interact with students and parents by E-mail and interactive computer programs, transforming teachers into learning facilitators and involving parents more in their children's education. All this raises new issues of responsibility and access—for students, parents and educators—and exemplifies the importance school districts must place on technology literacy.

With most school districts in America experiencing over-extended resources and limited budgets, more and more parents and community supporters are finding themselves raising funds and securing corporate sponsorships to provide their schools with technology labs. We can expect this partnership concept to increase. As the next century looms closer, we will soon see what kind of interactive global village it will take to raise a child.

(For additional information, contact Pierpont Communications, Inc., 1800 West Loop South, Suite 800, Houston, TX 77027-3210; 713-627-2223.)

Educational TV Coming to PBS

Watch your PBS stations in January for the premiere of "A Science Odyssey," a series chronicling this century's most revolutionary scientific and technological discoveries. Hosted by award-winning journalist Charles Osgood, the series will start on January 11, 1998, and will air in five parts:

- Matters of Life and Death: medical breakthroughs and ethics.
- Mysteries of the Universe: scientists' century-long struggle to discover fundamental laws of physics and astronomy.
- In Search of Ourselves: discoveries about human behavior from the past 100 years.
- Bigger, Better, Faster: the inventors, entrepreneurs and industrial scientists whose work fueled the technological revolution of the 20th century.
- Origins: lessons about the history of our planet, our own species and life itself.

A companion book, educational videos, home videos and an educator's guide will also be available. For more information visit the Web site (www.pbs.org/aso) beginning December 15, 1997.

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something more powerful than when each was alone. Dance participants have constructed that [which] is transformational to them.

Through these dance experiences, they see how active learning, cooperative learning, interdisciplinary arts and history are fused. They are mutually inclusive—not having one serve at the expense of the other.

J.H.: **What can you share with arts educators concerning your perspective of artistic learning?**
S.M.: When people think of the arts, their perspective is that the arts are soft and nonintellectual on one hand, or they are elitist and not for everyone on the other. With that rationale, there is no place for them in the curriculum. In the process of my work with those outside artistic fields, they experience the arts as requiring rigorous, reflective thought processes. They are engaged in higher order cognitive skills that are at the heart of learning in the arts. Therefore, it makes learning in the arts a very powerful thinking. The craft and the expertise requires a true arts educator to bring scholarship to their work and make a profound experience of each arts discipline they are teaching. It requires an artist/teacher/scholar integration.

I consider my career not just a job, or a mission, but a ministry—a peace ministry. A jazz ministry for intercultural understanding for peace and human rights issues.

Editor's note: Scott Morrow is a member of ACEI's Later Childhood/Early Adolescence Division and is active in working for the overall welfare of young adolescents. For more information, write Scott Douglas Morrow, Director-in-Chief, Institute of Advancement of Education in Dance, 28-04 33rd Street, Suite 8, Astoria, NY 11102 (718-721-9785).

win a free trip to the '98 naea convention from crayola®

As part of the Crayola Modeling Masterpieces Competition, classroom and art educators in grades K-12 are asked to create a sculptured tile using Crayola Model Magic or Crayola WetSet Clay based on the theme "Chicago Art and Architecture—Past to Present." The grand prize winner will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the 1998 National Art Education Association Convention (April 1-5), including airfare, a four-night hotel stay, NAEA conference registration fees, a variety of Crayola products and $500 spending money. In addition, three first prize winners will receive a complimentary four-night hotel stay at NAEA and paid registration; eight second prize winners will receive a complimentary one-night hotel stay at NAEA and paid registration; and 13 third prize winners will receive a supply of Crayola products for their classroom.

Tiles must be created with Crayola Model Magic or Crayola WetSet Clay, and should be no larger than one square foot and between 1/2 to 1 inch thick. Entries will be judged on originality and visual appeal by a team from Binney & Smith.

To be considered, teachers must submit a clear photograph of their tile, and include their name, address, school name, day and evening phone numbers and a written statement explaining the tile to:

Crayola Modeling Masterpieces
Binney & Smith
1100 Church Lane
Easton, PA 18042

Submissions must be postmarked by December 15; winners will be notified by January 5. For additional information, visit the contest's Web site at crayola.com/art_education.

committee updates and future plans

At the 1997 ACEI Annual Conference in Portland, the Later Childhood/Early Adolescence Committee met to discuss action plans for the year. We decided upon our luncheon speaker for the 1998 conference and have chosen a special committee project, which we believe will be relevant to those of us who work with older students.

We are honored to have Nancy N. Crews, from Middle Tennessee State University, as our luncheon speaker. The title of her presentation is "Planning, Developing and Implementing a Young Author's Conference: Celebrating Children's Reading and Writing." She will guide us through the the various phases of planning an author's conference, getting parents involved and celebrating children's success. Do plan to attend this very practical and easy-to-replicate workshop.

The major committee project under development this year will be either a resource guide, a reference handbook or possibly a Web page

linked to the ACEI Home Page (http://www.udel.edu/bateman/acei). We are planning to have input from parents, teachers and others who work with older students for this resource, which we hope will ultimately benefit children worldwide. As your Vice President, and on behalf of the committee, I encourage your support for this effort. We are looking for annotated resources for the following areas:

- appropriate Web sites for students as well as educators
- multimedia software, including CD-ROMs
- contests for students, especially in service learning
- publication opportunities
- listservs and discussion groups
- fine arts and multicultural opportunities
- contemporary multicultural books
- tips and resources for parents
- television programs
- clubs and specialty camps
- exceptional supplementary curricula.

The following ACEI members volunteered to look for middle school resources:

Joy Avelino-Caluag
Jeanie Burnett
Nancy Crews
Margaret Donaldson
Patricia Ann Goodnight
Gloria Hearn
Mary Larson
Mary McKnight-Taylor
Rita Newman
Janet Moss
Charlene Olliff
Jean Shifferns
Sharon White-Williams
Nancy Yost

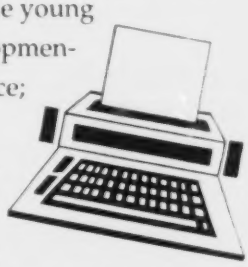
Bernard Casarone from ERIC is interested in our project as well. I invite YOU to become involved with this committee work by sharing your expertise with us on the above topics, or by suggesting other possibilities.

Please send your input to me by March 1, 1998, via E-mail (savaiano@Informns.k12.mn.us) and I will compile the results and share them when we meet in Tampa for the 1998 ACEI Conference the week of April 13th. If E-mail is not convenient, please send your information to my home address: 1601 Colorado Avenue South, St. Louis Park, MN 55416-1411.

—M. J. Savaiano,
Vice President Representing Later Childhood/Early Adolescence

Call for Manuscripts

The readership of *Focus on Middle School* is encouraged to submit manuscripts for publication that focus on young adolescence and effective middle level school practices. Topics may include young adolescent development and developmentally appropriate educational practice; descriptions of materials and programs; suggestions for implementing middle school concepts, such as interdisciplinary teaming, advisory programs and exploratory programs; issues affecting young adolescents and challenges facing at-risk populations.



Prospective authors wanting to discuss ideas and suggestions for manuscripts should contact the *Focus on Middle School* Editor, M. Lee Manning, Old Dominion University, College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Norfolk, Virginia 23529-0161; 804-683-4377.

Focus on Middle School

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A Quarterly Newsletter for the Education Community

Selected Resources for Multicultural Education

M. Lee Manning, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction, Darden College of Education, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

Implementing effective multicultural education programs requires appropriate instructional resources. In their efforts to promote multicultural education and to work toward the democratic ideals of justice and equality, educators often face a two-fold problem. First, they must identify resources. Second, they must evaluate their selected resources to determine treatment of diversity and their potential to contribute to multicultural education programs. The resources in this article have been evaluated for their treatment of cultural diversity and for their potential to contribute to multicultural education programs.

Evaluating Resources

Most educators agree that all curricular materials and resources deserve careful scrutiny, especially those resources claiming to contribute to multicultural education programs. These resources might show subtle biases, such as writing from a middle-class, majority culture perspective or showing people from differing cultural backgrounds only in menial and

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Designing and Shaping a Culture for the Middle School Classroom

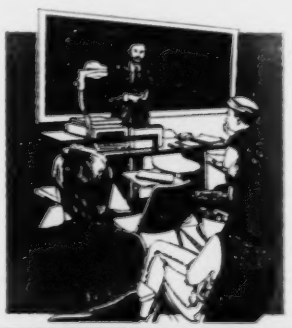
Kay Allen, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Central Florida, Orlando

Culture means tilling the soil in patterns and with purpose, making, as Thoreau said, the earth say beans instead of grass, that is, putting design and shape into a common environment, beginning in the mind whence all design flows.

—*Giamatti* (1989)

Designing and shaping the culture of the classroom also requires purpose and planning, which must come through the teacher's leadership. In the past, teachers commonly stood in front of a room and tried to pass on information to a large group of students. The goal of the middle school teacher, however, is no longer simply to dispense information, but rather to facilitate students' development into lifelong, self-regulated learners. Students must learn how to learn, and the culture of the classroom is one of the most significant ingredients in that process (Moore & Esselman, 1994).

The classroom culture is reflected in the *feeling tone* that prevails (Charles, 1996). The feeling tone is a combination of the attitudes, emotions, values and expectations of the teacher and the students. Classroom culture also refers to the socio-psychological dimensions of classroom life. The relationships that exist between the teacher and students, as well as the relationships among students, create a climate, or



culture, specific to that classroom (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1993-1994). To achieve a desirable classroom culture requires the teacher's leadership and modeling.

> Middle schoolers thrive on social interaction. Take advantage of this developmental need and let it work for you in building a culture of caring and inclusion.

Leadership

Your leadership role is vital in establishing a positive and productive classroom climate. The classroom culture should be all-inclusive; it should be a place where each student counts and is welcome. Such leadership is not an authoritarian process, but rather takes into account the purpose, needs and concerns of all participants.

Chris is a 7th-grade teacher. She is not an ordinary teacher; she is a master educator. When you go into her classroom, there is a sense that this is a very special and respectful place. The students in her classroom are very purposefully involved, and there is a stimulating level of energy. When I first met Chris, she told me that for the first five years she taught school, she felt like quitting every day. Things turned around for Chris when she realized the importance of establishing and maintaining a learning climate in her classroom. Now, beginning with the first day of each school year, she takes time to teach her students how to "go to school." This climate of learning in her classroom continues as a central theme throughout the year.

The example above illustrates the key concepts of designing, establishing and maintaining a constructive and facilitative classroom culture. To achieve an appropriate classroom climate, more is needed than instructional expertise. As a leader, you must:

1. *Be aware of and sensitive to the needs, concerns, expectations and values of all the students.* While there are many approaches to accomplishing this goal, one way is to focus on the students as individuals. Get to know something about each student. Spend some class time letting them share who they are and what they want from school. Middle schoolers thrive on social interaction. Take advantage of this developmental need and let it work for you in building a culture of caring and inclusion.

2. *Formulate and communicate a purpose.* You need to enthusiastically share the vision of the class and what it can accomplish. Your values, expectations and goals, as well as the students', must determine the image of the class. Being a part of a purposeful team plays into middle schoolers' need to feel included and important.

3. *Get everyone to think along the same lines.* This goal requires a lot of foundation building. Before you can get everyone "on board," you have to make a connection to who and where they are, and where they have been. Students are not blank sheets on which we can write.

Resources

Web sites for educators

www.ierc.com
The Internet Education Resource Center presents a collection of education company stores. The stores provide product details and new product information, as well as downloadable teaching ideas, contests to enter and sources of free materials.

www.ldonline.org.
This Web site from WETA, a Washington, D.C., public television and radio station, is dedicated to improving the lives of those with learning disabilities. "LD OnLine" was recently recognized with an Equality, Dignity and Independence (EDI) award for its pioneering efforts to provide information about learning disabilities via the Internet, thereby furthering public understanding of disability issues. In addition to in-depth information, the site offers audio clips from LD experts, bulletin boards for exchanging ideas, recommended publications and activities for children, state and national resource listings, and a calendar of LD-related events.

Middle schoolers come to us with a lot of background baggage that will be included in the trip.

4. *Serve as a source of motivation.* Your passion and enthusiasm can motivate the class and propel them toward unprecedented levels of performance. One of the realities of many students' lives is the absence of enthusiastic and positive adults. Depending on their circumstances away from school, they may only know negative, miserable people. Why should they strive to become educated if they see no positive outcomes from doing so? Why should they want to grow up if they see only unhappy grownups? You can be the positive role model for students as they search for a true identity.

Modeling

There are three ways a child learns; first is by example, second is by example, and third is by example.

—Albert Einstein

You must preserve your leadership role. Over time, how you represent what you expect from the students becomes essential. So many of today's youth do not have effective role models. The consistency with which you model the respect and acceptance of others provides stability for the students. Remember the saying, "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say."

Designing/Establishing: Getting Off to a Good Start

A good start is half-way to success.

—Chinese Proverb

The old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of

. . . continued from page 1

subservient positions. Therefore, educators should evaluate instructional resources to determine whether they provide accurate portrayals of people and promote the goals of effective multicultural education programs.

A long-respected and recommended evaluation list, "Ten Quick Ways To Analyze Children's Books for Racism and Sexism," appeared in the November 3, 1974 issue of *Interracial Books for Children*. Suggested criteria include evaluating materials to determine objectivity, accuracy, appropriateness and overall feasibility. More specifically, aspects to evaluate include stereotypes, story lines and illustrations that may be insulting, plots that may negatively affect children's and adolescents' self-esteem, and the authors' qualifications to write such materials. Rather than relying on one evaluation list, educators might want to devise their own evaluation list after considering the list in *Interracial Books for Children*.

Selected Professional Associations

Several associations provide materials that reflect and address diversity.

The Association for Childhood Education International (17904 Georgia Ave., Ste. 215, Olney, MD 20832) publishes *Childhood Education*, which contains articles (particularly in the Spring 1994 and Fall 1994 issues) on promoting an appreciation of cultural diversity. ACEI also published a second, updated version of *Common Bonds: Anti-Bias Teaching in a Diverse Society* (Byrnes & Kiger, 1997), which examines the growing cultural diversity in our schools, the various forms of diversity, and ways educators can build inclusive classroom environments.

Rather than relying on one educators might want to devise their

The National Middle School Association (2600 Corporate Exchange, Columbus, OH 43231) has a standing committee on Diverse Cultural, Racial, and Ethnic Concerns and has published *Celebrating Diversity: Multicultural Education in Middle Level Schools* (Manning, 1994). The association also provides professional development workshops on promoting multicultural education and an appreciation of diversity.

The National Council for the Social Studies (3501 Newark St. NW, Washington, DC 20016) publishes various resources on multicultural education. One exceptional article from the

continued on page 6 . . .

cure" is certainly true when it comes to the importance of establishing a constructive classroom climate. Instituting a positive classroom climate involves identifying, teaching and maintaining the conditions that will allow effective teaching and learning. Three important aspects of getting started with the right climate are *planning, teaching the expected behaviors* and *community building*.

Planning

Although planning is an ongoing process with every teacher, planning for the start of the school year is especially important. It goes without saying that thorough and developmentally appropriate planning of the instruction is vital. It is equally important, however, that you be aware of who you are and what you believe about students and education. Without this self-knowledge as a foundation for decisions, you are in danger of becoming only a "reactor." In that case, it will not be you, the teacher, who establishes the climate; rather, the climate will be whimsically controlled by the synergy of the class. Therefore, you must take a proactive approach to establishing the classroom climate.

Teaching Expected Behaviors

Much has been written about how teachers' values, expectations and goals influence students. We often fail to realize that additional determinants of the classroom climate are the *students'* values, expectations and goals. ". . . Students share high amounts of potential influence—both with one another and with the teacher . . ." (Shapiro, 1993, p. 91). The establishment of a culture, or climate, is an interactive process, with both you and your students making significant contributions. The leadership, however, must come from you. Success will not be realized until the goals, expectations and values of the class culture are clear, understood and internalized by all participants. Success in school is dependent upon more than academic success; students must also learn how to go to school in your classroom by learning the behavior that is appropriate to the school, and for each individual teacher with whom they interact. While some general norms of school behavior exist, teachers all have individual expectations that must be thoroughly communicated.

Teaching does not mean telling. Learning to go to school requires more than being told the rules. Students need to hear about and see examples. Even middle schoolers may need to practice the desired behaviors.

Education is a lived experience, and just as in all of life, the culture greatly affects the experience. The culture of the classroom should reflect a belief that everyone is a learner, and that we are all still developing, evolving and growing. "This means that everyone in a community is somewhere on a continuum of personal development, and no one is a finished product" (Putnam & Burke, 1992, p. 46).

Community Building

The class is a dynamic force that needs creation and ongoing renewal. In a classroom that exhibits a sense of community, teacher and students acknowledge and respect the interactive nature of their relationships. A classroom should encourage a sense of equality among members, but at the same time everyone should recognize that the teacher and the students have different roles and responsibilities.

The building of a community takes time, knowledge of group dynamics and commitment. Your students will go through stages and will need your understanding and facilitation to effectively forge the process, which can be viewed as a series of developmental growth stages. The following are the stages of team building that you should expect in your class:

1. Getting acquainted, or the orientation period.
2. Forming and searching for purpose.

3. Storming and coping with conflict.
4. Norming and becoming productive.
5. Performing and working as a unit.

Like developmental stages for the individual, these group stages are sequentially interdependent and structurally essential to building a learning community. Like development, you must respect the process and operate appropriately for each stage. The teacher needs to understand and facilitate the group process as it relates to developing a sense of community among the class members.

Maintaining: Keeping a Good Thing Going

While getting off to a good start is a major accomplishment, people will not stay fixed. No matter how well established the most relevant climate is, upkeep is necessary. Such maintenance is primarily a continuation of what was done to establish the positive teaching/learning climate. Over time, it is vital to maintain consistency and a continuing attitude of teaching/learning the expected behaviors.

Continuing Attitude of Teaching/Learning

Chris prepares her students for going to an assembly to hear an orchestra perform. In the days before the assembly, Chris plays orchestral recordings and brings related issues into the lessons. She and her students simulate attending a performance. She uses examples of acceptable behavior at a concert. When they return from the concert, Chris and the students discuss not only the performance, but also their behavior. They examine what they did that was appropriate and explore ways they might improve their behavior.

Chris's approach of continuing to teach the expected behaviors communicates to her students that school is a place of ongoing learning. Very rarely does she find it necessary to impose negative consequences on a student. Remember however, that any period of change or transition may affect your classroom dynamics. Various events during the year, such as vacation breaks, may disrupt the continuity of the classroom climate. A reorientation then may be required to rebuild the sense of commonality and purpose.

Summary

Conflict and disruption are a part of life, and as such are going to occur in the classroom. The collection of individuals that makes up the classroom is a reflection of the community's diversity. No relationship is totally free of conflict. We all have our good days, and some that are less so than we would like. If we have a secure and constructive climate in which to resolve these difficulties, however, the outcome can be a more balanced and mature approach to living.

The culture of the classroom can provide an environment in which students learn that they can design and fashion their own lives. It is there that they can learn to communicate, make effective decisions, and learn the form and pattern of healthy relationships.

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. . . continued from page 3

association's journal, *Social Education*, was "Multicultural/Global Education: An Educational Agenda for the Rights of the Child," from the April/May 1992 issue. Titles of additional resources may be obtained by writing NCSS.

Some associations work for the welfare and well-being of specific cultural groups, while others work toward the advancement of civil rights, the arts and for teaching the heritage of cultural groups once considered outside the mainstream. For example, the Coalition for Indian Education (3620 Wyoming Blvd., NE, Ste. 206, Albuquerque, NM 87111) works to promote effective education and health programs for Native Americans. The Coalition offers services, training and technical assistance, and publishes the *Coalition for Indian Education* newsletter and *Current Issues in Indian Education*.

An association working to help African Americans, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (4805 Mount Hope Dr., Baltimore, MD 21215-3297), offers materials for both students and teachers (such as suggestions for Black History Month and Black History Read-a-Thons) and provides lists of African American book publishers and museums. One excellent resource is the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Resource Guide*.

A third example is the Hispanic Society of America (613 West 155th St., New York, NY 10032), which promotes the Hispanic culture by publishing and disseminating general interest books, bibliographies, biographies and visual aids.

Many other associations work to promote specific cultural groups. A wealth of information concerning professional and cultural associations can be located in Daniels, P.N., & Schwartz, C.A. (Eds.). (1994). *Encyclopedia of Associations* (28th ed.). Washington, DC: Gale Research. Volume 1 - National Organizations of the United States (Part 1 - Entries 1-10,317; Part 2 - Entries 10,318-22,709; Part 3 - Name and Keyword Index) and Volume 2 - Geographical and Executive Indexes.

Selected Internet Sites

While space does not allow a detailed explanations of their resources, the following Internet sites may be of interest to educators:

- Multicultural Pavilion
  http://curry.edschool.Virginia.EDU/go/multicultural

- National Association for Multicultural Education
  http://www.inform.umd.edu/NAME/

- National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
  http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/

- ERIC Multicultural Resources
  gopher://ericir.syr.edu:30001/7? mult cultural or multicultural

- Multicultural Resources from James Madison University
  http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/multipub. htm

- Rural Clearinghouse
  http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~rcled/publications/mc/mc.html

Summary

A number of resources can help educators plan and implement multicultural education programs. Professional associations and Internet sites represent only two resources; other sources include the many excellent books on multicultural education, state departments of education, and several journals devoted to multicultural education. For effective multicultural education experiences, educators can collaborate on the collection and evaluation of resources and information.

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Ten quick ways to analyze children's books for racism and sexism. (1974). *Interracial Books for Children, 5*, 6-7.

surfing the web

I hope that all of you will take a moment to visit us at **http://www.udel.edu/bateman/acei**. Last month, we revised our home page to include the most up-to-date information about ACEI and the benefits that members gain through their involvement in the Association.

ACEI's Web site is divided into 11 major sections. ***History & Purpose*** provides a general introduction to the mission and organization of ACEI, its purposes and goals, and information about ACEI Archives housed at the University of Maryland. There is a direct link to the Archives and Historical Manuscripts Department at the University.

Who's Who in ACEI lists all members of the Executive Board and ACEI Committee Chairs—with direct E-mail links to these people. This

section also shows ACEI/United Nations representatives.

You can learn all about the many benefits of belonging to ACEI by visiting the *Membership* section. Included is a list of ACEI Branches and Branch Presidents (with E-mail and Internet links), information on how to start an ACEI Branch, customer services, and a membership application that can be printed and mailed to ACEI. This section also provides information about ACEI's Pen-Pal and Member-Get-a-Member Programs.

Another very useful reference section is ***Committees***, which lists 16 committees. Basic information about each committee is given. Committee Volunteer Forms are available from ACEI Headquarters.

Professional Journals and Newsletters highlights ACEI's two award-winning professional journals, *Childhood Education* and the *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. Publishing opportunities and submission guidelines for books, manuscripts, articles and brochures can be found here. Finally, in this section you can access subscription information for journals and ACEI's *Professional Focus Newsletters*.

Education Resources is the area to check for news about ACEI publications, reprints, audio and video tapes, out-of-print titles, and the joint publishers bookshelf. Also included in this section is a complete list of ACEI Position Papers.

Conference keeps you informed about the Annual International Conference & Exhibition, ACEI World Conferences, local Branch meetings and ACEI-sponsored workshops. In addition, look for information about the Hall of Excellence, Call for Presenters, Video Fair and exhibits.

ACEI & NCATE is designed to help you learn more about ACEI's role as a constituent member of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. See information about folio reviewer training, institution orientation for colleges and universities seeking national accreditation in elementary education, and curriculum folio guidelines.

Two sections provide information about ACEI's ***Speakers' Bureau*** and ***Contributions***. The latter describes seven special funds to which those who support ACEI's mission can donate money.

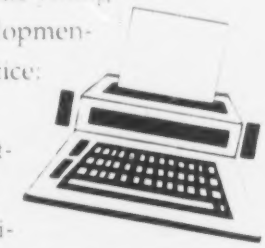
The final section, ***Roll Book***, is where those who visit our Home Page can submit comments or request additional information. In the past five months, nearly 7,000 people have used this valuable resource.

Over time, we expect ACEI's Web site to grow and become even more useful. Your feedback is important. If you have any suggestions for improvements, or if you think something should be added to the site, please send your comments to ACEI Headquarters. Thank you. We would appreciate hearing from you.

—Jerry Odland, Executive Director

Call for Manuscripts

The readership of *Focus on Middle School* is encouraged to submit manuscripts for publication that focus on young adolescents and effective middle level school practices. Topics may include young adolescent development and developmentally appropriate educational practice; descriptions of materials and programs; suggestions for implementing middle school concepts, such as interdisciplinary teaming, advisory programs and exploratory programs; issues affecting young adolescents and challenges facing at-risk populations.



Prospective authors wanting to discuss ideas and suggestions for manuscripts should contact the *Focus on Middle School* Editor, M. Lee Manning, Old Dominion University, College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Norfolk, Virginia 23529-0161; 804-683-4377.

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Study Reveals Factors That Prevent Teens from Sexually Aggressive Behavior

A study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics found that male teenagers who are healthy emotionally and connected with friends and adults are less likely to act out sexual aggression. For females, however, academic achievement is the main factor that determines their likelihood of being sexually aggressive.

Researchers from the University of Minnesota analyzed data from the 1992 Minnesota Student Survey. Of the more than 70,000 9th- and 12th-grade participants, 4.8 percent of the males and 1.3 percent of the females reported forcing someone into a sexual act at one time. These sexually aggressive teens were more likely than their non-aggressive counterparts to have been sexually abused themselves, witnessed the abuse of family members, used drugs and alcohol, been in gangs, spent extensive time "hanging out" or displayed suicide risk behaviors. Males who had close ties to school, church and police personnel were less likely to be sexually aggressive, as were females who received good grades in school.

The authors conclude that schools, health care providers and other adults can play important roles in spotting teens at risk of perpetuating sexual violence, and in promoting those factors that prevent teens from sexually aggressive behavior.

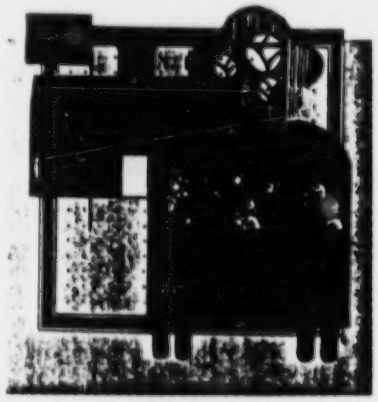
Lessons Learned from Successful Middle Level Advisory Programs

Thomas S. Dickinson, Professor of Education, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN;
C. Kenneth McEwin and Doris M. Jenkins, Professors of Education, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC

The importance of having quality advisory programs in schools for young adolescents is widely accepted and since the turn of this century has been recommended as an important component of developmentally responsive schooling for this age group (Myrick, Highland & Highland, 1986; National Middle School Association, 1995). Successful implementation of this crucial program component, however, continues to elude many middle level schools, with principals frequently reporting that advisory programs are very difficult to establish and maintain (McEwin, Dickinson & Jenkins, 1996). This article reports results from a study of 25 middle schools where educators consider their advisory programs to be highly successful.

The Study

The authors, while conducting a national study of programs and practices at 1,798 middle schools, included an open-ended survey item that asked respondents to identify "program elements, if any" that they considered to have reached exemplary status



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at their schools (McEwin, Dickinson & Jenkins, 1996). It seemed likely to the authors that if respondents identified programs as being exemplary, a degree of success had been reached that would make it worthwhile to conduct a follow-up study. Therefore, in 1997 a follow-up questionnaire was mailed to 50 randomly selected schools that indicated their advisory programs had reached exemplary status. Twenty-five of these schools responded, providing a rich base of practitioner-originated information. This article focuses on selected key information provided by those schools that might prove helpful to those planning new advisory programs or revising existing ones.

One respondent encapsulated the three goals as "to know children as individuals, academic advising, [and] career awareness."

The Schools

The middle level schools that responded to the survey were in both suburban and rural areas. These schools' enrollments ranged from 250 to 1,625 students. Fifteen of the 25 schools had enrollments of between 400 and 1,000 students. The vast majority of the advisory programs meet daily, in the morning, for 16-30 minutes, with no school reporting an advisory period longer than 45 minutes.

Program Characteristics

Goals of Advisory Programs. Schools responded to the question of advisory goals in three broad categories: *personal*, *academic* and *career* (Dickinson, 1988). Responses offered a rich variety of objectives: *personal*—self-image, responsibility, citizenship, personal goal setting; *academic*—study skills, facilitating academic success, organization skills, problem solving; *career*—career awareness, career goal setting, community service. One respondent encapsulated the three goals as "to know children as individuals, academic advising, [and] career awareness."

A significant number of respondents wrote about the relationship between advisers and students as a goal, as well as between individual students and small groups of peers. "To have an opportunity for closer relationships between adviser and

Resources

web sites for educators

www.usc.edu/go/seagrant
The University of Southern California's El Niño Web page is designed to help teachers "catch the wave" of interest in El Niño. The site offers links to other Web sites that provide up-to-the-minute data on ocean surface temperatures and levels and other primary scientific information. In addition, the site provides information from a recent online workshop that was sponsored by the USC Sea Grant.

www.Legacy98.org
The National Women's History Project has established this Web site for the 150th anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement. The site features an extensive chronology of important events in the Women's Rights Movement, as well as a state-indexed list of celebration programs. Also included are program and activity ideas for schools, celebration materials, curriculum ideas and links to other sites.

www.ala.org/teenhoopla/
The American Library Association's new Web site, "TEEN Hoopla: An Internet Guide for Teens," links to more than 100 sites of special interest to students ages 12-18. The site is the latest in a series of initiatives designed to showcase the role of librarians in helping parents, children and teens navigate in cyberspace. TEEN Hoopla offers links to sites on arts and entertainment, homework help, Internet help, health, college information, comics and more.

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student, to build interpersonal and social skills and integrate them into real-life situations, to develop a sense of belonging using a small group setting and allowing the adviser to be actively involved in the total development of their students; socially, emotionally, as well as academically."

Advisory Activities. The thematic approach for organizing advisory topics was used by an overwhelming majority of schools. These thematic topics fell within the three categories discussed earlier: *personal*, *academic* and *career*. A sampling of themes is provided as illustration: *personal*—self-esteem, abilities and disabilities, wellness, friendship and violence prevention; *academic*—know your school, goals, teamwork, learning styles, test-taking skills; *career*—service learning, volunteering, citizenship, my community/future, career planning. One school captured the nature of many of the successful and popular activities: "The more involvement [and] the less paper, the better."

Service learning activities are a major element of advisory programs, often with a curricular link (although these may be more covert than overt). The activities offered include service activities in and around the school, as well as those that involve the wider community. Often, an advisory group will pick their own service learning activity to implement. These range from relatively brief events to those that encompass an entire year.

Continuing to address advisory activities, respondents were asked if there were certain "tough topics" that were not allowed to be discussed or studied. The majority responded that they did not feel that any topics were "off base" for discussion or study. Two schools indicated that the choice of topics depended on the "comfort zone of the adviser." This is another indication of the degree of control that individual advisers in these programs exercise with their students.

For the schools that indicated that some subject matter was "off base," the list typically included controversial topics, such as abortion, religion, gangs, sex and sexuality, drugs and suicide. Several schools indicated, however, that while these topics did not appear in the advisory program they were covered in other school programs.

Since advisory programs often have been perceived as a way to deal with traumatic occurrences, respondents were asked if their advisory program included a plan to deal with such trauma. The responses split on the presence of a "crisis management" program incorporated into the advisory one. For some schools, this was part of the guidance or other program: "No, that is part of a special program with guidance and school psychologists."

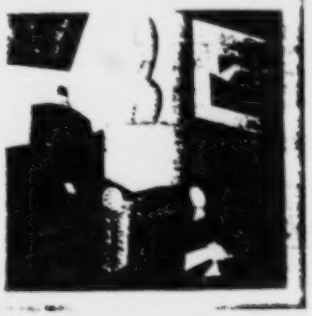
The programs that were in place called in a range of supports and often were beyond paper plans—they had, in fact, been used with traumatic situations. "Yes, this has happened—student was killed Sunday p.m., all teachers met 7:15 Monday, fact statement was released, counselors on hand."

Middle School Students curate exhibition at SAM

Imagine being 12 years old and having the opportunity to curate an exhibition at a major museum. As part of the experience you would select the art from museum storage, write text panels, choose colors for the gallery and decide where all of the pieces will be placed. In Seattle, Washington, 120 6th-graders from Washington and South Shore middle schools, in conjunction with the Seattle Art Museum, have done just that.

The exhibition, titled *Documents International: Identity*, features the students as co-curators, and will run through June 13, 1999. The exhibition is part of a larger program called *Growing Up with Art*, funded in part by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

A Documents International Web site will be accessible through the museum's site, www.SeattleArtMuseum.org. The site encourages participation and individual views will be tallied and posted.



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Program Implementation and Maintenance

Serving As an Adviser. For the vast majority of schools, serving as an adviser is not optional. It is considered "one of the duties of our academic staff." Another put it as "Advisory is part of every teacher's teaching assignment." One of the reasons mentioned for why the advisory function was *not* optional was to reduce advisory/homeroom sizes, as in this response: "To keep homeroom size down to 15 students, we need to utilize all faculty that we can."

Program Planning. All schools reported a planning process and staff development *prior* to implementation of the advisory program. Staff development was often formalized and covered a wide range of traditional activities: school inservices, observations of other schools' programs, summer sessions, staff retreats and state-sponsored workshops. In these sessions, a range of topics were covered: building consensus, rational processes, resiliency training, self-esteem building, diversity training, career development, adolescent development issues and active listening.

These schools use a variety of inservice staff development activities for advisers: beginning of the year, monthly and weekly staff inservice; new staff orientation; part of academic team program; meeting with the advisory program coordinator; and the use of written curriculum.

It appears that in many of these programs the counselor operates as the head of the program and functions as the main source of induction for new personnel. The most consistent response to how induction of new teachers was handled was through a system of *mentors* or *buddy teachers*. "We have a 'buddy' adviser system, plus the guidance counselor (who heads our program) provides in-depth one-on-one training." In addition, the team, the team leader and team planning time play an important induction and training role.

Program Evaluation

A variety of evaluation processes and different frequency of evaluation are utilized by the schools. These ranged from ongoing evaluations based on student and teacher responses to periodic surveys. Assessments involved parent, student and teacher surveys; formal observations by administrators; summer curriculum committees writing and re-writing school-wide themes; summaries of the week's activities; and annual evaluations by staff. There were formal mechanisms in place in many schools for review. "We have an advisory steering committee that meets monthly. Each academic team has a representative on this committee."

> *Programs were institutionalized; they were part of an ongoing and consistent school structure with assigned responsibilities...*

For schools that have been using advisory programs for a number of years the evaluation process has changed over time: "We've been doing it for 10 years—initially we evaluated quarterly, then two times a year, then one time a year; now, our committee evaluates each month as we plan next month's activities, plus teachers give us periodic feedback." And for a number of schools, evaluation of the advisory program was part of wider evaluation processes: "[We do] yearly [evaluation]. Survey completed by teams annually as part of our campus improvement planning process."

Maintaining a Program. Supporting the quality of an advisory program over time with an eye on quality was a focus that schools accomplished with activities in four broad areas:

- Programs were institutionalized; they were part of an ongoing and consistent school structure with assigned responsibilities (a key element of

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this institutionalization was an emphasis on *shared* governance)
- Communication with and among all key constituents and involved parties
- Support of the program through its place in the schedule
- Systematic assessment and planning process, especially a process that focuses on continual improvement.

Overcoming Teacher Resistance. Schools indicated a number of strategies and tactics to overcome, or avoid, the problem of teacher resistance to advisory programs. These ranged from "helping" teachers find other appropriate work to large doses of planning and support. As with any problematic situation, the schools tended to focus on the use of planning and support to avoid or overcome this problem. "[We] spent one year planning—weekly meetings with only those interested. Distributed weekly minutes of meetings to all staff for input. Gradually more and more teachers came to the planning meeting."

And while many schools planned on how to tackle teacher resistance, in one case the resistance overcame itself: "Yes [we met with] some [resistance], but most vocal ones [teachers] found that kids were nicer after we implemented A/A [adviser/advisee program]."

Finally, one school situated the resistance and how it was overcome in the larger context of middle schools; in particular, interdisciplinary teaming: "Team training was instrumental in bringing the problem together."

Key Professional Roles

When asked to identify the driving force behind advisory programs, respondents answered that it was a combination of individuals, or groups, in a variety of configurations. Generally, schools indicated that one or more of the following played the key role behind the development of the advisory program at their school: the principal, a small group of staff or a designated planning committee, the staff as a whole. Often, the driving force behind the development of the program came from the staff as a result of their belief in creating a "true" middle school: "The staff wanted to implement a total middle school program and this program is part of the total package." Another commented that "It is the lifeblood and foundation of the middle school concept/philosophy. It is a part of our beliefs."

Designated responsibility for the advisory program is scattered among many different individuals and groups, according to the schools in this study. However, every school had someone (or a group) who was overtly in charge of the program. Those responsible for the program were most often the planning/advisory committee, the principal, counselor(s), advisory teachers or a combination of these.

It was evident from the schools that the principals played a critical role in the overall success of the advisory program. They were seen as establishing parameters (including setting expectations and goals, and ensuring implementation), providing support (including finding resources, training staff and acting as public relations person), and "walking the walk" (serving as an adviser to a homeroom): "[I am] critical to the program. I am an adviser to a homeroom. We must 'walk the walk' and lead by example."

Counselors also played a significant role in all of the schools. For the most part, counselors directed, coordinated or monitored the school's advisory program. In addition, they provided help in securing activities, wrote advisory activities for staff, provided strategies on how to work with students, and followed up on issues that teachers discovered in advisory. Very few counselors had advisory groups of their own; instead they played an in-depth role in the overall structure of the program by accepting referrals from teachers.

The schools listed a range of desirable characteristics and traits for a successful advisory. These fell into three categories: individuals with sincere interest in young adolescents, humanistic attributes (caring, sensitive), and skills that provide the undergirding of advisory programs (listening, flexibility, structure). One school summarized these elements as "Teachers who enjoy being close to kids, have no inhibitions about taking part in the activities, and are

energetic people." Another school also caught a picture of an essential characteristic of quality advisers in relation to students and the expectations advisory programs have for them: "Believes in the adviser program and communicates that to the students. Has expectations for their involvement."

Recommendations from the Schools

Schools indicated a variety of resources that they found useful. However, there was no single set, or category, of resources that was common to a majority of respondents. Most resource suggestions are reflective of the following comment: "We have collected our resources from a multitude of sources. We repeat the ones that work."

Schools were asked to provide recommendations to plan an initial advisory program, or strengthen an existing one. The recommendations could be categorized into four major groupings:

- Philosophical study to embed the program within the total school structure. "Really study the philosophical rationale for having an advisory, don't mandate curriculum but provide lots of suggestions and resources, develop structure you can justify and don't assume the program will look the same at every grade level."
- Educate yourselves. "Don't use 'canned' programs, develop your own, and change it to meet your students' needs. Also, ongoing planning and evaluation is critical. Be sure staff believe in the concept and that it is accepted by the group to be implemented."
- Build it, like other programs, to grow over time. "Begin with well-structured lessons, plan ongoing inservice, regular monitoring, regular problem solving, extend lessons to the daily academic program."
- Be sensitive to teachers—their issues and concerns, their involvement, and their buy-in. "Make it teacher decision-based, administration should facilitate, have written curriculum, provide planning time, be flexible."

Schools were asked to recommend to other educators how to overcome resistance to advisory programs. Respondents indicated a now-familiar matrix of recommendations to overcome resistance: planning, staff involvement, communication and supporting structures (planning being one such structure).

Other schools' advisers took a wider focus—both in the constituencies involved and the time needed to overcome resistance: "Don't look for immediate success. Give the program a couple years to develop before deciding on its success. Also, look for relationship building to evolve; human relations is more of the focus rather than tasks."

Schools believed that community support for advisory programs was an essential element to its success. The range of suggestions to promote such community understanding was generally phrased as a component to be addressed to *parents*: involvement, communication, information, materials, training, input. "Communicate your purpose, the format, and materials used to parents. Invite them in frequently, the first couple of years especially."

Summary

When looking for lessons to be learned from middle schools with successful advisory programs, one response seemed to capture the perspective of the schools' comments about advisory programs. This response speaks to two underlying factors continually intertwined throughout this study—the pivotal role played by staff, and young adolescents as the ultimate beneficiaries of the program: "The program is one that is difficult to evaluate the benefits of. It is our 'gut feeling' that it has great value for students and staff. A significant byproduct is the benefit of staff learning more about the young adolescent."

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From the Vice President: projects construct learning

It is spring, a time when middle school students are really ready to move out of their seats and into more relaxed, cooperative learning atmospheres. What better time to begin some detailed projects? Group projects can bring together all areas of the curriculum in the pursuit of a special topic, and they are ideal for giving students of varying interests and maturity levels the opportunity to participate fully at levels that are comfortable and appropriate for them.

The choice of topics and the extent of the project need only be governed by individual students' interests and maturity. Work connected with projects not only makes for personal commitment, but also provides practice in developing research skills. When students work in teams, they can more effectively find sources in the library and on the Internet, look things up in reference books, and pull together information in organized ways. They become aware of the processes involved in information gathering and become ever more independent in their learning.

In April, my students started a study project on the seven ancient wonders of the world. Working in teams of three or four, they researched the contributions of the people of that time, learned about the geography of the different regions, and put together a data retrieval book. Then, they began to construct three-dimensional models of the six lost wonders of the world, placing historical descriptions on placards for later display.

As a classroom teacher, I hope to accomplish the following:

- give students an appreciation for the size, design and craftsmanship of these architectural wonders
- encourage and support students as they research and locate sketches showing the likenesses of these structures
- create a manageable system for obtaining and sharing appropriate books, materials and media that apply to these ancient wonders
- share these hands-on creations with other classes in the school and with nearby schools
- display these structures, and information about them, in public places around Minneapolis
- teach students about budgeting money, keeping good records and working together as a team.

This project accords with our district's grade-level expectations for students ages 9-14, and fits into the Minnesota Profile of Learning by integrating the disciplines of English language arts, math, fine arts and social studies. It also builds on our school theme, "Kids Under Construction," since our building is currently undergoing a huge renovation. Each team will be given approximately $40 to spend on materials to construct their ancient wonder in a one meter by one meter by one foot plastic box. With an Imagination Grant, made possible from the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* and Cowles Media, along with the Minneapolis Public Schools and Minnesota Arts Education Partnership Program (MAEP), this project will become a reality for all of us to enjoy.

History gives us a perspective on modern times. By studying past eras and completing history projects such as the one described, we see parallels to our own experiences, including the harsh realities as well as testaments to the amazing ingenuity of the human mind. Please write to me about successful projects that you have tried in your classroom, and I will develop a column related to this sharing. You can send me an E-mail message about your project at: savaiano@ lnformns.k12.mn.us.

—M. J. Savaiano, Vice President,
Later Childhood/Early Adolescence

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Call for Manuscripts

The readership of *Focus on Middle School* is encouraged to submit manuscripts for publication that focus on young adolescents and effective middle level school practices. Topics may include young adolescent development and developmentally appropriate educational practice; descriptions of materials and programs; suggestions for implementing middle school concepts, such as interdisciplinary teaming, advisory programs and exploratory programs; issues affecting young adolescents and challenges facing at-risk populations.

Prospective authors wanting to discuss ideas and suggestions for manuscripts should contact the new *Focus on Middle School* Editor:

Daniel L. Kain,
Instructional Leadership,
Northern Arizona University,
P.O. Box 5774, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5774.

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